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What the Alarm Clock Said.

(Helen A. Hawley, in the 'Christian Endeavor World.')

'You must certainly buy an alarm-clock, Ruth. I don't like to have you wait another night. You'd better get it this evening on your way to meeting; the stores will be closed when you come out. Get one of those little dollar clocks; you can wrap it in your scarf when you go into meeting, and no one will see it.' Mrs. Trueman laid her hand on her daughter's cheek.

'I can't have you waking at all hours for fear it is time to get up. You're growing pale already,' she added.

Mrs. Trueman and Ruth did their own housework, and had recently taken in two mechanics as boarders. These men must have an early breakfast and Ruth had the new experience of rising at half-past five. She insisted that it was her place to be the first one up, to start the kitchen fire and set going preliminaries of the breakfast, which her mother, more skilled in cooking, completed. Ruth dropped to sleep soon after her head touched the pillow; but these new responsibilities wakened her so easily, and she was lighting matches at all hours of the night to see whether it was time to get up. She said she never could tell whether she had slept one hour or six, when once aroused.

A protracted meeting was in progress, conducted by a devoted evangelist; but thus far the interest had not been such as usually resulted from his efforts. Night after night the church was filled with listeners; but, while Christians were somewhat revived, there was next to no response from the unconverted.

Ruth attended the meetings whenever she could. She was already one of the Lord's own, and very earnestly she prayed for one and another who were still strangers to his love.

On this night, in accordance with her mother's wish, she bought a clock on the way to service, and received careful instructions how to set it, the dealer assuring her that it was quite run down then. Concealing it under her coat, she went on to the meeting, which soon seemed to her more solemn than any which had preceded.

Then, just as the evangelist was pleading with all his heart, and the stillness of the audience was intense, that unlucky alarm-clock started! Whir-r! Whir-r! Whir-r-r! The speaker lost his hold. The solemn interest seemed at an end. Many faces turned toward the sound; some smiled broadly; the children tittered outright. In Ruth's confusion, she tried to smother it, but to no avail. Would the thing never stop? At length, with flaming cheeks, she almost ran from the place, scarcely halting until she reached home.

'Oh, mother,' she exclaimed, 'this dreadful clock has spoiled the meeting! I am so ashamed—and the man said it wasn't wound. There were two or three just alike, and he must have put up a different one from what he showed me first.'

By degrees Mrs. Trueman reduced Ruth's incoherent words to sense. 'You are not to blame at all, girlie, and have no need to feel ashamed.'

'But it was so ludicrous, mother; and they laughed—laughed!' Ruth repeated in a tragic manner.

'Naturally they did, and I am as sorry as you are. But it was only unfortunate.'

Was it unfortunate, though? The evangelist deemed it so, certainly, when he was trying to gather the scattered thoughts

from so many brains back to his important theme. Sadly he realized that one brush of the ridiculous has power to sweep aside the most sacred impulses. It was some minutes before he could regain any hold, and at the close with sinking heart he gave the usual opportunity for any who wished for prayers to rise. No service of his should end without this offer, but the glance he sent over the audience that night was perfunctory. To his joyful surprise, to the surprise of everyone present, a young man arose immediately, and not only stood for a long minute, but said in a distinct tone, 'I ask your prayers.' And then, after the general dismissal, a few faithful souls gathered about the young man, praying for him, helping him to find the One who has promised a welcome to all who come.

The next evening, both Ruth and her mother went to meeting.

'You must go to keep me in countenance,' Ruth said. 'I couldn't have the courage to face the people I know after last night;' and, though Mrs. Trueman answered, 'Silly girl!' she quite understood her daughter's embarrassment.

There was a new feature that night. The leader, more sure of his ground, after a short exhortation, threw the service open for testimony; and the same young man rose again, with face illumined. At sight of him, Ruth found self-control was difficult. It was Jack—Jack Henderson! For him to testify in meeting meant a great deal to Ruth! This is what he said:

'When I was a little fellow in my home five hundred miles from here, because I liked to lie in bed late, my father gave me an alarm-clock to break the lazy habit. He told me when it went off it would always say, "Now! now!" and I was to jump up the instant I heard it. I came into the meeting last night with no motive than curiosity and to pass the time. When that clock started off, it seemed funny to most of you; but, I'm telling you the truth, to me it said, "Now, now!" just as it used to; only in some way the words were linked with the speaker's message; both were from God. They repeated, "Now is the accepted time," "Now is the accepted time." I expected to be a Christian some day, but last night I couldn't get away from that "Now!" I don't know who had the clock. I couldn't look around then, but I shall always be thankful it was here to speak to me. For'—he hesitated as if to make his declaration more emphatic—'for it made me arise and go to my Father, and he has received me for Jesus' sake. From now on, God helping me, I am a Christian.'

No one smiled over the incident after that. There were tears of joy on many of the faces; there was conviction working in other hearts. It was the beginning of a harvest of souls.

As Ruth and her mother started for their home, Jack Henderson joined them.

'O Jack,' the girl said, 'what a glad surprise!'

'You weren't here last night,' he answered. 'I looked for you at the close.'

'And you didn't know! It was my clock went off; and, when it wouldn't stop, I simply had to run away.'

'Your clock!' The young man's voice trembled as he said it. 'So you helped in the great decision. The thought makes me happy.'

'O, but Jack, I have been praying for you a long time.' Ruth hardly realized what that admission meant, but the gentle pressure of her hand on his arm added force to the words; and Jack laid his other hand over hers in a caressing touch.

Mrs. Trueman, who was walking on the other side of Ruth, discreetly closed her ears, repeating the while to herself,

'God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform.'

How to be Converted.

(The Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, D.D., in 'N. Y. Evangelist.')

'My reason and my conscience tell me that I ought to be a Christian, and I often wish that I were one. But the Bible tells me that "Except ye be converted, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven;" how shall I be converted? Conversion implies a new heart; but my heart is hard and stubborn; how can I change it?'

These questions may be agitated by very many of my readers; they are of such vital importance as to demand plain and direct answers. To shut Jesus Christ out of the heart means spiritual death; it shuts the soul out of heaven. I would say to this honest inquirer: If you use the means as diligently for the softening and converting of your heart as you have been using them for many years to harden your heart, you will soon become a sincere and useful Christian. The first one is honest and importunate prayer. Jesus Christ says that the regeneration of a sinful heart is the work of the Holy Spirit. Pray to the Holy Spirit that he will take away your stony heart and give you what the Bible calls 'the heart of flesh.' As you have sinned grievously, you may well pray for forgiveness; you may well pray for light, guidance, and help; but, chiefest of all, pray for the Holy Spirit's renewing and converting power on your wicked heart. Don't be satisfied with 'asking prayers' of other people. This may be only a snare if you rely on it. 'Pray for yourself.' Go at once to 'headquarters;' this momentous matter must be settled between you and your Saviour. Beseech the Holy Spirit to break down the door that shuts out Christ.

There is a great temptation to excuse your sins to yourself. None of your excuses are such as you would dare to offer on the day of judgment. Instead of excusing your sins and trying to palliate them, strive earnestly to break off from them. Make the resolute attempt upon the very first sin to which you are tempted. Set yourself against sin, and call for the Spirit's power to help you conquer it. Conversion means renouncing of sin, and no one has even begun to serve Jesus Christ until he has declared war upon his favorite appetites and lusts and his passions.

Unless you sincerely desire to become a Christian, you never will become one; if you do desire it, employ every means and influence that may change the current of your affections from selfish and sinful things toward Christ. Reading God's Word is one of these means; studying Christ's character and claims on you is another; turning away from sinful companionships is another; setting your face like a flint against all attempts to draw you back into old habits or entanglements which might tend to harden your heart the more. Above all, pray, and still more 'pray' for the Spirit's power.

As you are a free moral agent, you are to use every means for changing your heart. If a drunkard desires to be delivered from his bondage to the bottle, he is not content with simply willing to become a sober man. He takes certain steps. He puts the bottle out of his house; he avoids the society of those who would tempt him to drink; he makes a solemn pledge of entire abstinence, and not only uses such wholesome physical tonics as may sustain him in his struggle with his old enemy, but he implores the help of Almighty God. These means faithfully employed may give him the victory, as they gave it to John B. Gough and other converted inebriates. Suppose that a young man had become intensely attached to a beautiful and fascinating woman, but had discovered that an alliance with her would be fraught with danger to his peace and his welfare; would it be enough for him simply to will a change in his affections? That might be a futile failure. But if he should destroy every keepsake that would recall her memory; if when he thought of her he kept before his mind only what was offensive and unworthy; and if he sought for himself purer and worthier associations, he might by these means overcome his former perilous passion. That would mean towards her a change of heart.

It is true, my friend, that the Holy Spirit alone can do the mighty work of regenerating your soul. Too deeply, too intensely you cannot hold to this solemn fact. It is, therefore, of infinite importance that you 'co-operate with the Holy Spirit.' Refusing to do this, you grieve the Spirit; you quench the Spirit. You will never be converted while working 'against' that blessed Spirit which points you to Christ, and strives to draw you to Christ. Whatever the Spirit presses you to do—whether in refusing a temptation or performing a right deed—do it promptly. Whatever you can do to please Jesus Christ, do it promptly. Shut your ears to the fatal foolishness that you are merely 'passive' in conversion. You are not so. Repentance of sin is an act of the mind, and faith is a hundred miles deeper than an intellectual belief in Jesus Christ; it is the act of clinging to him and joining your whole self to him. The very word 'conversion' signifies turning right around; it is your turning away from sin and self-seeking and self-living and turning to Jesus Christ, your atoning Saviour, with full purpose to obey him. There is no more passivity in all this than there is in eating, or breathing, or walking.

Perhaps too much has been said against 'feeling' in the process of conversion. Hatred is a feeling, and you must hate sin; love is a feeling, and I cannot conceive of a person's being thoroughly converted without feeling ashamed of his former wicked self and feeling love to his Redeemer and his fellow-creatures. The more squarely you face yourself, the more conviction of sin you will feel; the more you face your suffering, dying, atoning Saviour, the more will your hard heart be melted into penitence. Come close up to the Cross, my friend, and look at yourself there! Look onward to the day of judgment, and see how you feel there as a rejector of Jesus Christ who trampled on his redeeming love! Look at the good you may do as a faithful, earnest, useful, courageous Christian, and then fervently pray to the Holy Spirit to make you one. And work with Him! As Spurgeon used to say: 'The way to do a thing is—to do it.'

Playing for Keeps.

(Boston 'Congregationalist.')

A gentleman in one of the best residence neighborhoods of a New England city advised his little boy the other day not to play marbles for keeps. He soon discovered that his boy, by accepting his advice, had shut himself out of the popular game of the season. Not another child in the neighborhood would play with him, except for keeps. Many of those children live in Christian homes, but they all put their pennies into marbles to win or lose. The master of the public school says that although gambling with marbles in the school yard is forbidden, one of his chief troubles arises from fights among the children over disagreements about this same game.

This instance is mentioned merely as a symptom. We believe it is a fact undisputed that the passion for gambling is increasing in intensity in this country and is spreading among all classes. Men and women grow more eager to get something for nothing, and to get it away from somebody, anybody. In the saloon the throw of the dice, in the parlor the turn of the cards, at the roulette table the roll of the ball, on the race track the book maker's numbers decide who will win and who will surrender his money to the winner.

No vice is more fatal than gambling, to the virtue of integrity, to high social relations, to a worthy estimate of the value of life. Those who earn what they possess prize their possessions, give thought to their use of them, enjoy the fruits of their use. Those who give to others what they have gained by honest labor give of their own lives to help mankind. Those who gain money by chance prize it little, risk it readily, give it away with little sense of service or of appreciation of those whom they serve. Life itself tends to become to them a game, with growing temptation to stake its treasures on the turn of trifling events. What men risk willingly they value lightly.

To the passion for gambling must be charged up a large proportion of business failures, broken families, losses of reputation, defalcations and suicides. Young men with bright prospects risk their own money, lose it, steal from their employers who trust them, expecting to get back what they have lost and to replace what they have taken, and realize too late that they have thrown themselves away. Society is feebly conscious that it is being defrauded, makes laws against certain kinds of gambling, enforces them irregularly, and all the time is raising up more gamblers. Marbles are treasures of the child. Property, reputation, honor, friendship, family, life are treasures of the man. When he is ready to stake any of these against chance he has cheapened them all. He has vitiated his own sense of the real value of things. He has weakened his usefulness to his family, the church, society, and the state. His success in the game is no less a failure than his loss would be. 'What doth it profit it a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?'

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BOYS AND GIRLS

My Old Colonel

(C. N. Carvalho, in 'Sunday at Home.')

I have a sore heart to-day. In the telegrams this morning I see the death of my dear old friend and master, General Bowater. Well, he died in the service of his Queen and country as a man should, and as he wished to do, but none the less do we grieve at the loss of so true a heart, so brave a soldier.

I served General Bowater ten years—he was Colonel then—and might be in his service still, were it not for this disabled leg of mine that prevents my being of use to any one. And as in those ten years I learned to know him better than any other man in the regiment could do, it is fitting that I should be the one to describe him to you.

I need not tell you he was tall and of soldierly bearing, or that he had clear-cut features and stern grey eyes—that could look tender enough if their owner were so minded. That sort of thing you will find in any newspaper you pick up at a street corner. Perhaps they will say he was one who exacted prompt and unquestioning obedience; who invariably punished an accident, and rarely forgave an offence. For all that is no more than the truth. They may say, too, that he has been known on occasion to require impossibilities, or what seemed to be such, but no one will assert that he ever willingly exposed his men to a danger he would not face himself. And all must admit that his unceasing care for the comfort, morals, and well-being of those under him showed a heart full of sympathy and kindliness.

I never got into trouble with Colonel Bowater but once. I had been with him then about two years, and he had learned to place great confidence in me. Of course I had had many a brush with him in that time, if I may use such an expression, for like most young fellows, I was given to slur over things in a way that must have been excessively irritating to so punctilious an officer. Point-Device was his name in the regiment, you must know, and it suited him down to the ground. But careless as I was, I had one redeeming quality in his eyes—I never tried to hoodwink him. He would have excused impertinence itself sooner, and any one who has the slightest knowledge of my master will know what that is to say.

But at length a day came when I could no longer make that boast. The deception was innocent enough, goodness knows, and not calculated to bring any advantage on myself, but deceit it was, and as such the Colonel regarded it. The tone in which he accused me of having tried to take him in, rings in my ears still, in spite of the many years that have passed since I heard it, and I am thankful to remember my fault has been long forgiven.

Colonel Bowater was a widower. Almost the first thing I heard when I joined the regiment was that his young wife was dead and had left him a little son between three and four years old. The child lived with its aunts, the Misses Bowater, some ten miles off, but he used to come to the camp now and then, and all the men knew and loved the bright, high-spirited little fellow. Our eyes always turned towards the father and son with affection and respect when the Colonel passed down our lines on his white horse with little Cyril seated in front of him. As his body-servant I had a good deal to do with the boy, and we soon grew very fond of one another.

One day my master told me the child was coming to the camp for a long visit.

'It is to be an experiment, Barton,' said he. 'Cyril will be seven years old very soon, and he will hardly know me for his father if we continue to live apart. In a few months, too, I may have to go on active service, and then, who knows, if I shall ever see him again?'

I was surprised to hear him speak in this strain, for it was unlike him to be despondent. To change the subject I hastened to ask what he required of me.

He would be glad, he said, if I would give an eye to the boy, that was all. Cyril would have a tutor, of course, but there were many little things I could do, and he believed the child would be safer with me than with any one else.

I was delighted at the idea. I was always fond of children, and Cyril was the sweetest little fellow I had ever seen. Mr. Hayes, his tutor, turned out to be a very pleasant, gentlemanly young man, and an excellent teacher—so the Colonel informed me—but out of school hours, I soon found that his pupil preferred my society, and all my leisure time went in playing with the boy, and taking him and his great collie Bran for rambles over the downs. And in this way the summer went by very pleasantly.

One very wet afternoon when Mr. Hayes chanced to be absent, Colonel Bowater and his little son were sitting together—he writing out some military despatch, and master Cyril reading. The child was rather restless that day. He did not like having to remain indoors, and, unluckily, I had no time to play with him. Getting tired of his book at last, he cast about for something better to do, and his eyes soon lighted on a new pop-gun one of the men had made for him. Now, as he was by no means a mischievous child, I am at a loss to conceive why he should have fixed on his father's ink-stand for a target, but that was what he did. At first his shots fell short, and the Colonel, who would have gone on writing had real bullets been flying about him, paid no heed. But at length one of them hit the mark, and up came a splutter of ink into the Colonel's face.

'Don't do that again, Cyril,' he said as he wiped his forehead. 'My papers are of importance and must not be soiled.'

The boy wheeled round and cast his pellets through the open window. Then growing weary of the silence, he aimed a shot at his father. Colonel Bowater stood fire as if he had been in the trenches, and little Cyril, with a merry laugh let off another round—this time, unfortunately, scattering the ink all over his father's papers.

'Ring for Barton, Cyril,' the Colonel said rising hastily, 'and do you keep out of the way yourself, there's a good child. You have done more mischief than you have any idea of.'

It took some time to restore order. Meanwhile, Cyril watched us from the hearth-rug. He looked a little frightened, I fancied, and no wonder, for the Colonel's face was as stern as you please, and he never uttered a word. Any other child would have shrunk away, but instead of that, he edged himself closer and closer to his father's side and at length tried to climb on to his knee.

The Colonel put him down gently. 'Not now, my dear,' he said, without moving a muscle of his face. 'You have given me many hours of hard work, and I have not even time to scold you. You must run away now and not come in again to-night.'

'I am so sorry, papa,' the child pleaded. 'I will never do it any more.'

'I hope not,' said his father grimly. 'I only wish you were old enough to repair the damage you have done. You would have it to do, I can assure you. Barton,' he added, turning to me, 'you will put Master Cyril to bed at once, if you please, and he will go without his tea to-night. Perhaps that will help him to remember not to disobey me in future.'

Cyril made no remonstrance, but on reaching his bedroom he burst out crying. I was sorry for the little chap. He had not intended to do any mischief, and I really thought his father was hard on him. Moreover, the punishment was more severe than the Colonel knew, for the boy had eaten little or nothing that day. He had taken some childish dislike to the boiled mutton at dinner, and would not touch it.

I put him to bed according to his father's orders and then went about my work. Presently I went in again and found him sitting up in bed with a book in his hand—one of his lesson-books it was. As the Colonel had not given him a task, I saw no reason he should work, and I said so.

'You see, I left my story-book in papa's room,' he said, deprecatingly, 'and I could not go in to fetch it, could I? But I haven't read much of this, Barty,' he added, wistfully, 'for—do you know, I am so dreadfully hungry.'

'Ah,' said I, 'that is because you were so dainty this morning, Master Cyril. The mutton was really very good. I don't know why you wouldn't eat it.'

'Well, it can't be helped now,' the brave little fellow said with a most winning smile. 'I wouldn't mind it much if papa wasn't vexed with me. That is the worst of it.'

'I don't believe,' I went on meditatively, 'that your father ever meant you to go so long without food. Why, it will be twenty-four hours by breakfast time to-morrow. I think I will get you a snack to serve instead of dinner, Master Cyril, and then perhaps you will feel better.'

'Oh, do you think you may?' he asked eagerly. 'Go and ask papa, Barty.'

'No need,' I rejoined confidently. 'It is better not to disturb him just now. But this is only some dinner you are going to have. You can make yourself easy.'

So off I went and got some sandwiches and a rosy apple such as I knew the dear child liked, and set them before him. He snatched the plate from me and began to eat as if he were half famished. Then suddenly he stopped, and stroking my hand, said pensively:

'You are quite sure papa won't mind, Barty? Quite, quite sure?'

'Yes, dear,' I said kissing him. 'Besides, he will never know anything about it.

You must not tell him. It will be all right then any how.'

He did not look satisfied, but he drew the plate towards him again and finished his meal. Then he took up his book.

'I wouldn't read any more, if I were you, Master Cyril,' I urged. 'Put the book away and take a nap. It is getting late.'

'But I can't go to sleep unless papa comes in and kisses me,' he rejoined plaintively. 'Do tell him so, Barty. He won't mind your going in.'

I duly delivered the message, but the Colonel did not even raise his head in answer. He was writing as if for dear life. He had promised to send off the despatches by a certain time, and not to fulfil an engagement was, in his eyes, an unpardonable sin.

Hour after hour went by and still he wrote on. But at last the work was done and he rang for his dinner. Not a word passed between us while I was serving him, but when I had cleared away and was about to leave the room, he bade me bring a tumbler of hot milk and leave it on the table. The order rejoiced me, but I knew my place too well to venture on a remark.

With a glass in his hand, he crossed the corridor and entered the opposite room where the child lay, leaving both doors wide open. Finding him fast asleep he took a seat beside the bed and waited.

As the lamplight fell upon the father and son, they looked curiously alike in feature, but whereas the child's face was calm and peaceful, that of the Colonel wore an anxious, troubled expression I could not account for. What could he be thinking of? I asked myself. Of his lost wife, perhaps, and the loving care and companionship little Cyril might have had had not God willed otherwise. That and many another thought passed through my mind as I waited for my master to come out, but the real reason I never guessed.

At last he gave a deep sigh, and, stooping over the couch, he kissed the little face. The boy opened his eyes.

'Ah, papa, is that you?' he cried, throwing his arms round his father's neck, 'I am so glad you have come. I didn't think I should go to sleep till you did, but somehow I have had a little nap.'

'And how are you getting on, my little man?' the Colonel enquired. 'I brought some milk for you. You want something, don't you?'

'Rather,' said Cyril demurely, as he put the glass to his lips. 'I don't know what I should have done, only Barty gave me some sandwiches this afternoon. But I'm dreadfully thirsty all the same.'

'And when did he do that?' asked the Colonel.

'Oh, I don't know. It was after you had sent me away. He said I ought to have a snack because I had eaten no dinner, and it was too long for me to wait. He told me not to tell you, but I thought I'd better.'

'Thank heaven for that,' I heard the Colonel say below his breath. Then aloud, he went on, 'It was quite right to tell me, Cyril—you are a very good boy. Now say your prayers and go to sleep again. God bless you, dear child.'

He came out, closing the door behind him, and went towards his own room. I followed as usual, but on the threshold he turned to me and said he should require nothing further, and I had better go to bed for it was past midnight.

By morning I had forgotten about the matter, but I soon saw Colonel Bowater had not. He said nothing on the subject till he was fully dressed, and then he began:

'Barton,' said he, 'wait a moment. I have a word to say to you. I wish you to leave my service.'

You might have knocked me down with a feather. I tried to speak, but no words would come.

'You hear what I say?' he resumed.

'Yes, sir,' I essayed to answer, 'but, begging your pardon, Colonel, I don't understand you. What fault do you find with me?'

He shrugged his shoulders contemptuously, and went on with a touch of scorn in his voice:

'I should have thought it was plain enough. It is because I find you are trying to teach my child to deceive me, Barton. You did not succeed this time, thank heaven, but I must not give you another chance.'

'It is a hard sentence, sir,' I said, humbly enough, 'but surely,' I added bitterly, 'you cannot intend to turn me adrift like this. You will never find a man to serve you more faithfully than I have done.'

'That is my affair,' he said shortly. 'You can go now. I will see you again after breakfast.'

I made no effort to detain him. I was overwhelmed. The worst of it was, the accusation was true. I had endeavored to make his child conceal the truth—I need not say with no evil intention. I know now why my master's face looked so troubled the night before. He had overheard what I had said to little Cyril (as I might have known he would do, had I given it a thought, for the two rooms were exactly opposite each other, and neither of the doors were closed), and he was wondering what course the boy would take. But he need not have doubted him.

Naturally I said nothing on the subject to the child when I dressed him that morning, and he, dear little fellow, gave me many an unconscious stab by his artless prattle. I knew how grieved he would be to part with me, and it made my heart ache to think of it.

I could see when I went into the breakfast room a little later, that he had been told I was going away, for his eyes were red, and he looked to me very shyly when his father said, 'I wish you to pack Master Cyril's trunk, Barton. He is going to pay a visit to his aunts. Let it be ready at twelve o'clock. Mr. Hays will accompany him.'

Cyril was not fond of staying with his aunts, though they were both very kind to him; the noise and bustle of the camp, to say nothing of his father's society, being more to his taste. But it was no thought of that kind that made him cling to me as I lifted him into the cab, and sob as if his little heart would break.

'Good-bye, dear old Barty,' he said, through his tears. 'I am sure you didn't mean to be naughty yesterday. Do tell papa so, and then he won't be angry with you.'

It was good advice, though I was scarcely in the mood to follow it just then. I was as proud in my way as my master was in his, and I thought he was treating me unjustly.

Yet, when it came to the point, I could not get the child's words out of my head, and before I knew what I was doing, I found myself pleading for a mitigation of my sentence. I have often thought that had it not been for that little angel, we two might have gone our separate ways and never have known how warm a feeling for each other lay at the bottom of our hearts. As for me, I should have quitted the regiment and gone to the bad. I am convinced of that.

The Colonel looked very grave when he heard my petition. For some minutes he sat silent, his chin resting on his hand.

'I had already promised Master Cyril to re-consider my decision,' he said, speaking very slowly. 'But I should like you to go away for a time—say a couple of months. If, at the end of that period, I get a good report of your conduct, you may resume your duties. I should be sorry to lose you, Barton, for you have served me faithfully and well, as you told me last night. And I believe you see your error and will not let anything of the kind occur again.'

It was a curious whim of his, for he hated to have a strange servant about him. He was preparing for himself weeks of discomfort. But with that I had nothing to do. As he would have said himself, it was his affair.

'I will see Mortimer this evening,' Colonel Bowater went on, 'and tell him to find me a servant for the interval. I daresay he can do that by Saturday. Your wages will go on as usual, but I would rather you took service with some one—it will keep you out of mischief.'

'At your orders, sir,' I replied, with an indifference I was far from feeling, for, to say the truth, I was glad to be taken back on any terms.

I would much rather not have sought for a situation, but as the Colonel wished it, it had to be done, and I was taken on by a Major Dickinson, whose own man was in hospital just then. The worst of it was that, in this way, every man in the regiment knew I was out of favor with my master, and to a man they believed I had ill-treated the dear child; an assertion that cut me to the quick, but one I was far too proud to contradict.

I had hoped Cyril would remain with his aunts till my term of probation was over. It was dull for him there, no doubt, but he was well taken care of, and that would not be the case at the camp, in my opinion, if any one but myself had the charge of him. However, he came back at the end of a fortnight, and, on the whole, I was glad of it, for the very morning of his arrival, as we were out on parade, he flew into my arms, in defiance of all regulations, and kissed me a hundred times. No one dared to taunt me with having been unkind to him after that.

My hardest trial was one night when it was reported about that he was dangerously ill. Major Dickinson, at great inconvenience to himself, gave me leave to go over to Colonel Bowater's quarters to enquire for the child, and if they needed me, he added, I might stay the night. But a sick nurse was in attendance, so my services were not required, and as the little patient had to be very quiet, I was not even allowed to see him. Fortunately it was

only some childish ailment, and he was soon about again.

Those two months seemed the longest I had ever known, but they came to an end at last, and I resumed my old duties. Though he said but little, I could see my master was as glad to have me back again as I was to be there, and as for little Cyril, he took no pains to conceal his joyous satisfaction.

I remained with Colonel Bowater many years after that. A wiser, kinder friend and master no man could have. He was one of whom it might well be said:—

'No truer Time himself can prove you,
Though he make you evermore nearer and dearer.'

And if the world contains another man deserving of similar praise, it is his son, Lieutenant Bowater, the little Cyril of my story.

Why One Boy Could Be Trusted.

The lady of the house was standing in the vestibule, casting an anxious eye down the street.

'Are there no boys in sight?' asked a voice from within.

'Yes, plenty of boys on the street, but you know how particular I am about Pet. I should like to be sure that the boy who rides her will not be rough with her.'

Just then a sturdy young fellow of ten came whizzing by on a bicycle. It was not his own, but one that its owner was generous enough to lend to the boys who had none, and he was taking his turn while the other boys lay on the grass and played jackstones. He was wishing as he rode along, 'My! if I only had a wheel for my trip to the farm!'

Just then he suddenly straightened himself up.

'Ting-a-ling-ling!' rang out the bell of the bicycle sharply, and as she slowed up the other boys half rose and looked wonderingly. They could see nothing to ring for.

'What was it, Dick?' they inquired.

'Oh, nothing but a sparrow. I was afraid I would run over it; the little thing stood so still right in front of the wheel.'

'Ho, ho! Rings his bell for a sparrow!' sneered the other boys as Dick dismounted.

'Mamma's itty witty baby.'

'I don't care how much you make fun of me,' he replied, good-naturedly, yet not without a red flush on his brow. 'I guess I wouldn't run over a sparrow, even, when I could help it by ringing or stopping.'

'Come here, please, Dick,' called a voice from the doorstep of one of the handsomest houses on the avenue. 'You are the very boy I want to drive a pony to the country and back. It is out on the Darlington Boulevard. Would you like to go?'

'Why, yes, ma'am,' quickly answered Dick. 'I have an errand out there, and I was just dreading the walk.'

'Then I am glad you may ride. I was wondering whether I could trust one of those boys to be kind to Pet, when I overheard about the sparrow. This made me willing to trust you.'—'Ram's Horn.'

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Saved in a Basket, or Daph and Her Charge.

CHAPTER III.

THE WATER-LILY.

At sunrise the morning after she set sail, the 'Martha Jane' was dancing over the waves, far out of sight of mainland or island.

Daph was an early riser, and in the gray dawn she bestirred herself with her usual waking thought—'This is a busy world, and Daph must be up and at work.' Her first glance around showed her that she was not in the southern kitchen, which had so long been her domain, and a merry sound near her reminded her of the new duties she had undertaken.

THE CAPTAIN GIVES DAPH A PURSE.

Charlie was sitting up in the berth, his bright black eyes sparkling with delight at the new scene in which he found himself.

'Pretty! pretty little bed!' were the first words that met Daph's ear. The hearty hug with which she responded to this pleasant greeting, and the consequent laugh of the child, roused his fair sister.

Louise started up, and looked wildly around her. 'Where are we, Daffy,' she said, anxiously.

'We's just on board a beauty ship, a-going to see pretty countries over the water,' said Daph, coaxingly.

'But why do we go?' urged the child, by no means satisfied.

''Cause, 'cause,' said Daph, ''cause de great Lord tinks it best.'

The face of little Louise instantly took a sobered and submissive expression, and she said quietly, 'Well, Daffy, Lou will try to be a good girl; where's Dinah?'

'I'se to be nurse now, Miss Lou,' answerer Daph, promptly.

'Oh! How nice! No cross Dinah any more!' exclaimed the little girl, clapping her hands with very great delight.

Charlie thought proper to clap his hands, too, and to cry out boisterously, 'Cakey! cakey!'—a cry which Daph well understood, and for which she was amply prepared.

She drew from one of her huge pockets some cake for the children, and then they all three began to chat as pleasantly as if they were at their favorite resort, under the old tree that grew in front of Daph's southern kitchen.

Daph found it a difficult business to dress her young master and mistress, but Louise was a helpful little creature, and was of great assistance in enabling the new nurse to select the suitable garments, from the store that had been hastily thrust into the great basket.

It was an easy matter to comb Louise's soft, straight, golden hair off her fair forehead, but it was another thing to deal with

master Charlie's mop of short chestnut curls. The new bond between Daph and the sturdy boy had well-nigh been broken, by the smart pulls she gave, in the course of her unskilful efforts.

When Captain Jones cames into the cabin after his usual round on deck, in the morning, he was greeted by the sound of merry young voices, which struck strangely on his ear.

Daph gave one peep from the stateroom, to be sure who was near at hand, and then, leading out the children, she bade them: 'Go right to the very kindest gentleman that anybody ever had for a friend.'

Charlie put out his arms towards the honest captain, who took the little fellow warmly to his heart.

Louise held on Daph's apron with one hand, and the other she put out timidly towards her new friend.

That small, soft, gentle hand was placed in the hard, dark palm of the captain, quietly as a flower might fall on a wayside path. Captain Jones bent tenderly down to the fair, slender child, and kissed her smooth forehead. She loosened her hold of Daph, and nestled at his side.

Again those stranger-tears filled the captain's eyes, but he did not look the worse for them, or for the kindly smile that beamed from his frank sun-burnt face.

An odd-looking party sat round the breakfast table, in the cabin, that morning. Captain Jones was at the head, with Charlie on his knee; opposite him was perched the little Louise, while the weather-browned face of Daph appeared at the side.

Daph had claimed the privilege of milking 'Passenger'—the cow which Captain Jones had taken with him on many voyages, and on which he had lavished much of the surplus affection of his bachelor-heart.

'Passenger' would have found out that she had powerful rivals, if she could have seen Charlie, enjoying his cup of fresh milk on the captain's knee, and Louise looking at him with mild trustful glances, that went right to his heart.

Daph saw all this, if 'Passenger' did not, and with her white teeth in full sight she moved round the table, in the position of waiter, which she had assumed to keep her darlings in view, and to have a care that their new friends, in their abundant kindness, did not feed them too freely with sailors' fare.

That was a happy day to the children—that first day on board the 'Martha Jane'; and the captain prophesied that Charlie would 'stand the sea like an old salt,' and Louise would be as much at home on it as the 'Martha Jane' herself.

There had been a fresh breeze all day; but towards evening the wind grew much stronger, and Daph would have found it hard to carry even a trifle on that head of hers, which had so steadily borne many a heavy burden. She began also to experience certain strange internal sensations, for which she could not account; but the faithful creature bore up without a complaint, though she staggered to and fro in a way which made the rough sailors laugh merrily at her expense.

Poor Daph! Such sufferings as her's could not long be kept secret. Through the live-long night she lay in the anguish of sea-sickness, which can only be appreciated by those who have experienced its miseries. In her ignorance, she supposed herself to have been seized by some fearful malady, which must soon take her life.

'Daph would be glad to die, she so awsome sick,' she said to herself; 'but, den, who will mind de babies? No, no! Daph won't die yet. De great Lord won't let her; Daph knows he won't.'

For two days the poor negro wrestled mightily against the horrors of sea-sickness, bearing up with the motive, 'Daph must live for the babies!'

Meanwhile Captain Jones had all the charge of his new pets. 'Passenger' was almost forgotten, as the stout sailor walked the deck, with Charlie peeping out from under his rough overcoat and Louise walking at his side, wrapped in the long, soft shawl that Daph had stowed away in that wonderful basket.

They had strange talks together—that strong man and those prattling children—and they learned much from each other. He told of the wonders of the sea—the great whales and the floating icebergs—and the petrel, that the sailor never kills.

Many long years, Captain Jones had made the sea his home, and much he knew, which books had never taught him; yet in little more than three short years, Louise had caught a priceless secret, which he had never found in any land. He was familiar with the wonders of nature; but to her the great Creator, to whom he was a stranger, was as a familiar, trusted friend. The marvels which Captain Jones could tell of the ocean, but increased her wonder at his power, who 'made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and all that in them is,' and in her simple way she would 'praise the Lord for all his wonderful works.'

(To be continued.)

The Silver Card-Case

(Clara J. Denton, in the 'Michigan Advocate.')

Margaret was alone in the house, and she was glad of it.

'Now,' she said to herself, 'I can see just what it is that uncle brought home to Constance last night. So mean of her to rush off in that mysterious manner without giving me even a glimpse of it. Luckily I saw where she put it, and I'm sure she didn't lock the desk; no one ever locks up things in this house. Of course I'll not touch another thing. I'll just take out that package. I'll know it the minute I set my eyes on it, open it, peep at the wonderful thing, and do it right up again. Constance will never know, and no harm will be done.'

'But,' said Conscience, 'would you like it if Constance were visiting at your house, and should watch her opportunity to ransack your things?'

'But I won't touch another thing,' was the answer to Conscience, 'and I shouldn't mind in the least if Constance should do just what I intend to do, open the package and peep into it. I should call it a good joke. When any one is so very sly they deserve to have some one get ahead of them.'

Thus soothing her conscience she went to the desk in which the mysterious package had been secreted. She opened the desk easily enough, for, as she had expected, it was unlocked. The package lay in plain sight, but, as she was about to lay her hand upon it, she heard a step on the side porch. Full of guilty terror lest she be caught at her prying, she took hold of the desk front to close it up again, but it did not move. She tugged and pulled at it, and while she was doing so the door opened and Alta, a young girl who lived next door, stepped into the room.

'I rapped,' she said, 'but you didn't answer, so I walked in, for I knew you were here.'

'I didn't hear your knock,' said Margaret. 'I was so absorbed with this contrary desk front. Do, please, come and close it up for me.'

But Alta also found the cover immovable. Oh, pshaw,' she exclaimed, after repeated failures, 'let it go. Constance will be at home soon, and let her close her own desk.'

'No no,' said Margaret in great distress, 'I must get it closed before she comes,' and she attacked the obdurate front with renewed vigor. Alta, lacking Margaret's motive for persevering at the desk cover, strolled off to the shady croquet ground, and again Margaret was alone. But she had lost all interest in the mysterious package, in fact, she no longer saw it. Her one thought was to close the desk before her cousin's return. But while she was still tugging at it she heard Constance come singing up the veranda steps. 'Oh, if she will only think she left it open!' was Margaret's one frantic thought as she bounded to the other side of the room.

Constance went immediately to her desk, and turning toward Margaret, said to her sharply:

'What have you been doing at my desk?'

'I was looking for a better pen,' replied Margaret, hurriedly, which was the first plausible falsehood that came to her mind.

'Well, there are several good ones here, but they don't seem to have been used lately,' said Constance, with biting sarcasm, and giving her cousin a contemptuous look, she pressed a spring at the side of the cover and closed it without difficulty.

Then, turning to Margaret, she added:

'But just remember, it is not safe to meddle with things that don't belong to you, for you cannot always be sure of putting them back exactly as you found them,' and with another scornful glance she left the room.

Margaret was so overcome with chagrin at this unexpected rebuff, that she shut herself into her room for the remainder of the day, and in the morning, before her cousin was out of bed, took an early train for home.

Some five years after this affair, a cousin who lived in the town with Constance came to visit Margaret, and one day, as they were discussing old scores, the cousin said:

'What a beautiful silver card-case that was that Constance gave you for a birthday present. I happened to be in the store when uncle bought it. How proud and pleased you must have been.'

Poor Margaret could only murmur some sort of assent, but she felt that she had been most severely punished for her meddlesome curiosity.

'Never, never again,' she said to herself, resolutely, 'will I interfere in other people's affairs.'

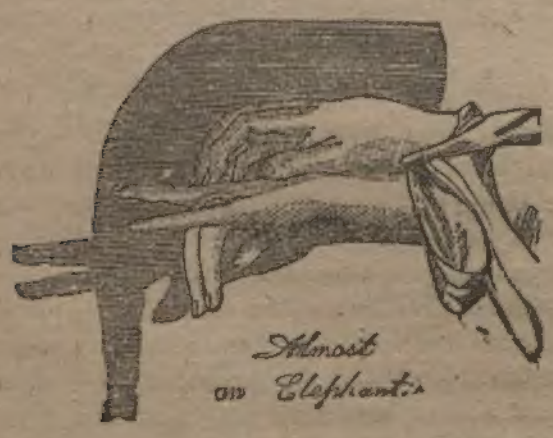
And she kept her promise.

Holiday Fun.

A favorite amusement for the long winter evenings has always been the making of shadow pictures on the walls, and

It is hard to say who enjoys them most, the wondering children or their ingenious elders. The sketches show how to make quite a menagerie of shadow animals, without further explanation. The one most familiar to us all is, of course, the elephant. Another simple one is the goat, which is capable of laughable grimaces if properly manipulated. The

bird is the prettiest of all, and, by changing very little, may be made into a butterfly or bat. Some clever caricatures may be



formed—such as the old man's head here given. When the operator becomes expert in moving his fingers to make the animals wink, wag their ears, and open their

mouths, the children will think it the best fun in the world. An interesting article describing these

pictures appeared recently in 'The American Boy.'

—'Congregationalist.'

A Captive Maid.

A Story of Congo Land.

('Juvenile Missionary Herald.')

Old Batula lay ill, perhaps dying; he, the strong man, Batula, the most powerful chief in all the region—a mighty man was Batula! Had he not slain hundreds in battle and eaten of many strong men, whose flesh, entering into him, had given him their strength in addition to his own? And did he not own more wives and slaves than any chief he had ever seen? And was he not feared all along the great Kassai river. But now he lay so weak, so sick, with terrible pains in his head, his body and face covered with loathsome sores; for Batula was ill with small-pox, that disease so dreaded in all countries, and throughout the village there were noisy cries of men, with shrieks and the wailing of women and children. Should Batula die, what earthly power could keep many of these wretched subjects of his from being thrown into the grave with him? Poor creatures! No wonder their hearts were sad. The witch doctor came into Batula's hut and told him there were

evil spirits about him; and he also told him to put a goat in the bush near the house, and some time in the night the evil spirit would come and take the goat; he would then be pleased and leave Batula, who would soon be well.

Now, Batula was a wealthy chief and had many fine goats, and, to use a Congo expression, the doctor had 'reddened his eyes' on Batula's goats; in other words, he coveted them. Batula had a goat placed in the bush, and in the night it disappeared; but the poor man, alas! grew no better. Every day the doctor told him the same story, and every night a goat was tied in the bush till all Batula's goats were gone, and he grew no better. Then the witch doctor said some one has bewitched Batula, and he must find the witch and put him or her to death.

Now, among Batula's slaves was a bright, happy-faced girl, named Moso. This girl he had brought home with him a few days before he was taken ill. He had been down the river in his canoe and had bought the girl. This girl spoke a different language, and the marks on her body were different from those on Batula's people, showing that she belonged to a different tribe. Then another thing was odd about this girl; she had a very queer-looking fetich, and she had been seen talking to it. It was white inside, with little black marks over it, and she would look at it and talk to it, then kneel down and say some words, and two of the words she often said were 'Jesu Christu.' Now, why did she kneel down, and why did she say, 'Jesu Christu,' and what did those two words mean, anyway? She must be the witch, and if the witch doctor would tell Batula to have her put to death, then all would be well again. So spoke the village people, and so said the witch doctor. He must do something to keep up his reputation, so he will tell Batula Moso is the witch.

Poor Moso! She cannot understand their words, but she knows what was done in her own village before the missionaries came and told them 'God palaver'; and ever since she had been a Christian she had tried so hard to teach others the blessed story of Jesus and His love—that story which had changed her life so much and made her love her neighbor as herself. But what could she do? She went into her little grass house, and there kneeled down and asked God to help her in this dark hour. Outside she could hear the frantic shouts and yells, and her name spoken many times; then the people burst into her hut and dragged her forth to the 'palaver house' (you would call it the 'courthouse') of the village, and set her before the witch doctor. He wore a large mask on his head, made of fur, and decorated with beads and cowrie shells; around his neck a necklace of leopard teeth strung together with elephant hair; his dress was woven of grass, with a deep fringe of the grass on its lower edge; his body was covered with grease and red paint. He denounced her as a witch, and said she must die that Batula might be saved. Just as he pronounced these words there was a noise of approaching feet, and through the tall grass there burst into view three tall young men, dark-skinned like themselves, and a fourth man with skin like milk, eyes the color of the sky, and hair like the grass when prepared for weaving. Never before had they seen a man like this one. To be sure, Batula had told them that he, when down the river, had seen men like this; but to most of the people this white man was a revelation, so much so that for a time Batula's illness and the palaver about Moso were forgotten. But the sharp eyes of the stranger had seen there was something going on in the village and knew the witch doctor held the cup for some purpose; so they asked what the palaver was. At the sound of their voices Moso started to her feet; they were speaking the language of her far-away people; 'perhaps God had sent them to save her.'

So she spoke to the strangers and told them her story. When her story was finished, the white man said, 'Show me the sick man,' and took her by the hand.

The story that follows is too long for telling here, but it is enough to say that the white man was a missionary physician, and, by God's blessing, he was able to save the life of Batula. This made a wonderful impression not only upon the chief, but upon his people. After a time they learned that what they though was Moso's fetich was a book, and later on she began to read to them from it. It was the Bible, and they learned from it of God, and of His love for them, and both Batula and the old witch doctor became Christians. When a few years afterwards Batula died, everything was changed. There was no witch doctor, and no talk of killing slaves in honor of the dead chief. Such is the power of the gospel to change hard and cruel hearts.

A Zealous Attendant.

Mildred's papa was pastor of a village church, and Mildred's playmate was Speaker, a big dog just outgrowing puppyhood and its pranks. One Sabbath morning Mildred showed symptoms of measles and mamma said: 'No going to church to-day.' Later Mildred went to the woodhouse to condole with Speaker, imprisoned there to prevent his church attendance.

'Poor, shut-up Speaker,' said Mildred, 'I'll make believe send you to church.' So, with much trouble, she arrayed him in one of her outgrown dresses. Through the full sleeves Speaker's fore legs were forced, the waist safety-pinned across his shaggy chest, and a little sunbonnet tied under his chin.

'Now, Speaker, I'll just peek out, but you musn't go,' said Mildred, unfastening the door.

Speaker's paws went against it with force; open it went in spite of Mildred, and up the street dashed Speaker.

In the midst of hymn-reading there was a rush of pink gingham up the church aisle, a bombardment of the pastor's knees by clumsy, ruffle-encircled paws.

Then Speaker sat on the platform and surveyed the congregation from the shade of the pink poke bonnet. No 'make-believe' for Speaker. He was really there. —'The Congregationalist.'

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LESSON II.—JAN. 10.

The Preaching of John the Baptist.

Matthew iii., 1-12.

Golden Text.

Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Matthew iii., 2.

Home Readings.

Monday, Jan. 4.—Matt. iii., 1-12.
Tuesday, Jan. 5.—Is. xl., 1-11.
Wednesday, Jan. 6.—Mal. iii., 13; iv., 6.
Thursday, Jan. 7.—Luke i., 5-17.
Friday, Jan. 8.—Luke vii., 24-35.
Saturday, Jan. 9.—John i., 19-28.
Sunday, Jan. 10.—Luke iii., 7-18.

1. In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea,
2. And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.
3. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.
4. And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.
5. Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan,
6. And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.
7. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?
8. Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:
9. And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.
10. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire.
11. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:
12. Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

(By R. M. Kurtz.)

INTRODUCTION.

Our lesson last week was in Luke, who writes of Christ more especially in his character as the Son of man. This time it is in Matthew, who writes of Jesus as the long expected Messiah, the King of Israel. There are two genealogies given in the Gospels, one in Matthew and one in Luke. Matthew, who treats of Jesus as Israel's King, traces his descent from Abraham, the father of the Jewish race, through David, thus giving his royal Jewish descent. Luke carries his genealogy back to Adam the first man, for he treats of him as the Son of man.

Now, you will remember that the Old Testament, which in the time of Christ was the only Bible the Jews possessed, has numerous prophecies concerning him, so that, in seeking to show that Jesus was in very truth the One long foretold, who was to be the successor of David the king, Matthew might be expected to refer to the prophetical writings in the Scriptures which we commonly call the Old Testament. We find this to be the case. For instance, if you will look at the first two chapters of Matthew, you will discover at least five references to Hebrew prophecy as it referred to Christ.

In to-day's lesson we deal with the forerunner of Christ, John the Baptist, whose coming was also foretold in the Old Testament and whose birth was attended with supernatural manifestations. He was born a few months before Jesus, and was called the Baptist because he baptized those who repented of their sins. See Malachi iii., 1, and read the account of John's birth in Luke, first chapter.

THE LESSON STUDY.

Verse 1. 'In those days came John the Baptist.' 'In those days' refers to what has just been said in the closing verses of the preceding chapter. There we were told that Jesus dwelt at Nazareth, so that it was before he gave up his home life that John his forerunner, began to preach. 'The wilderness of Judea' was not a desert, but the wild and uncultivated regions of Judea.

2. 'Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' To repent is to think of and sincerely regret what has been done. The word conveys the idea of a change in conduct; one regrets the wrong and no longer commits it.

'The kingdom of heaven' was about to be manifest in Christ the King. Remember that, at this time, Israel had not, as a nation, rejected Christ, though they did so later. Had they received him as their longed for Messiah and King, the history of the world would have been very different. His herald, John the Baptist, was now proclaiming him, and very soon Jesus was to begin his public ministry.

3, 4. 'For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias.' Matthew turns to call attention again to the fulfilment of prophecy. The reference is to Isaiah xl. This Scripture was familiar to the Jews, and Matthew merely refers to Isaiah's utterance in order to locate the passage, for remember they did not then have the chapter and verse as we have.

'Had his raiment of camel's hair,' etc. From this verse we learn of John's simplicity of life. It has been pointed out that his habits as here indicated were well suited to his life in the wilderness. 'Camel's hair' was a coarse cloth used by the very poor. 'Locusts' of the kind here referred to are still used as food in that part of the world.

5, 6. 'Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea,' etc. This is a remarkable statement. John did not need to seek after audiences. The people kept coming to him from all the region about. Why was this? If you study the times in which John lived you will discover that the Jewish nation was in bondage, the Jewish religion had become a cold formality, and the whole people longed for light and deliverance, such as their prophets had foretold. When, therefore, it was reported that a great preacher had appeared in the wilderness, telling of the nearness of the Redeemer, we can get some idea of the eagerness with which all classes sought to learn what he had to say.

'And were baptized of him.' They not only heard but acted, repenting and being baptized, thus publicly renouncing and turning away from the old lives of sin.

7-10. 'But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees,' etc. The Pharisees represented the dead formality of the religion as it then was, while the Sadducees were a worldly sect that denied the future life. We do not know their motives in thus coming to John. Probably they varied, but John vigorously denounced them, yet urged them to bring forth 'fruits meet for repentance.' That is, live and act in a way worthy of sincere repentance.

'And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father.' John warns them against relying upon the idea that, because they were children of Abraham, they would necessarily be saved. He declares that God could raise children up for Abraham from the very stones. The mere fact that they were children of Abraham would not save them, their lives must be right. So with us, mere membership in the church and mere Christian 'profession' will not save. Matthew vii., 21-23.

'And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees.' The cold formality of the Jewish faith was near its end. The unfruitful tree was to be cut down. They must depend for salvation upon something else.

11-12. 'He that cometh after me,' etc. Notice that John was making no claim of authority, place or power for himself. He was only a forerunner, and he now refers to Christ, who is to come after him. John baptized with water unto repentance, but Christ should baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Fire is a symbol of power, and was manifested visibly on the day of Pentecost.

'Whose fan is in his hand,' etc. This verse is a figure taken from the winnowing of grain to separate the chaff and the wheat, and is here used to express Christ's authority and power to judge men, and to reward and punish.

The next lesson is 'The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus.' Matthew iii., 13; iv., 11.

C. E. Topic

Sunday, Jan. 10.—Topic—What are some tests of repentance? Luke iii., 8-14; Ps. li., 1-17.

Junior C. E. Topic.

GOD'S CREATURES.

Monday, Jan. 4.—'In the beginning.' Gen. i., 1-8.

Tuesday, Jan. 5.—The earth and sea. Gen. i., 9-13.

Wednesday, Jan. 6.—The sun and moon. Gen. i., 14-19.

Thursday, Jan. 7.—The first man. Gen. i., 26-31.

Friday, Jan. 8.—The first Sabbath. Gen. ii., 1-3.

Saturday, Jan. 9.—Beginning of the world. Gen. ii., 4-7.

Sunday, Jan. 10.—Topic—The animals God made. Gen. i., 20-26; Luke xii., 6. (Band of Mercy Meeting.)

All Should Help.

(J. R. Bradley, in 'Ram's Horn.')

The superintendent should heartily cooperate with and, so far as may be, supplement every phase of the work of his teachers. In the school-room he should give ample time to the teaching of the Word. All other features should be distinctly and markedly subordinate. He should systematically cultivate and encourage the mastery of the Scripture, especially on the part of the teachers.

The co-operation of parents should be diligently sought, and, especially when they are members of the church, they should be persuaded, if practicable, to become regular attendants of the school.

The pastor should be a large factor in the work of the school, having a distinct, well-recognized, and regular part in it. He should become the intimate personal friend of every member of the school and should encourage each scholar to look upon him as such.

The social side of the school life should be carefully looked after. The several classes, especially those composed of scholars above fourteen, should meet often at the home of the teacher, and at intervals, not too infrequent, there should be general social gatherings of the school.

After the conversion of a scholar he should be encouraged to take up some form of simple, Christian work, especially Sunday-school work, and as he gains facility in doing that he should be led into still larger fields of Christian endeavor.

Temperance

Right or Revenue?

(Katie V. Hall, in the 'Pacific Ensign.')

What! license a man your brother to slay,
To lead your sons downward, your daughters astray?
Can you, professed Christian, thus sin against light?
Ah! pause for a moment, think! can it be right?

'But,' say you, 'our bridges and walks need repair;
The cost of improvement is heavy to bear.'
Such foolish excuses will not stand the test;
The blood of lost souls upon you will rest.

You are teaching your boys to be honest and true,
To pay without fail what to others is due.
But, say, are you voting to license the den
Where Satan has planned to make gamblers of them?

That daughter, as pure as the lily so white,
You look on her now with pride and delight,
Yet, careless and thoughtless, you're lending a hand
Her virtue to blight, her fair barque to strand.

Oh! can you afford to sacrifice right,
For license or favorite party to fight?
Oh! rise in your manhood, for truth take your stand!
Strike hard at this monster that's blighting our land!

What a Picture Did.

To a little boy in a primary class at Sunday-school was once given a picture of a glass of wine, in which the liquor was sparkling and beautiful to behold, but in which could be seen a serpent slowly uncoiling itself. He could not understand the picture, so, full of eager questionings, he applied to his mother, who told him how sadly true the picture was; how certainly sure it was that the wine when it moveth itself aright bites like a serpent and stings like an adder. He never encountered a serious temptation to drink, until, in the junior year of his college course, he with a friend was making New Year's calls. Coming to the home of a fashionable young lady, wine was proffered him. He declined, as he had always done before, without serious thought; whereupon the young lady, expressing her astonishment, took the glass, saying, 'You'll surely not refuse to drink to my health?' He at once assented, took up the wine, and raised it to his lips. In that moment he saw before his eyes the picture in his early Sunday-school paper. He paused, put down the glass, told the lady of it, adding: 'Never has one drop of liquor passed my lips, and now will you take the responsibility of my drinking this?' With an impatient gesture she replied 'No,' and so the liquor went untasted. Later he became an eminent clergyman, and stood in the front rank of his denomination.—'Temperance Leader.'

Old Country Friends.

Do our subscribers all know that the postage on papers to Great Britain and Ireland has been so greatly reduced that we can now send any of our publications, postage paid, at the same rates as obtain in Canada.

'Daily Witness,' post paid, $3 a year.
'Weekly Witness,' post paid, $1 a year.
'World Wide,' post paid, $1 a year.
'Northern Messenger,' post paid, 30c year.

Why He Gave It Up.

A sea captain testified that he became an abstainer from watching the effects upon his seamanship of a single glass of spirits. He had to decide, for instance, whether he could safely sail through a fog. Without the drink he said to himself, 'It will not be safe; better lie to till the fog clears.' He took a glass of whisky, and at once found himself saying, 'Oh, it is safe enough; go ahead.' He at once resolved never to touch it again, for he realized that the false courage caused by a single glass might lead him to an act of imprudent seamanship that might involve the loss of his ship. The one glass may lead a young man to take a fatal step that he would never have taken without it.

A Forcible Notice.

Smokers are too apt to disregard the rights of their immediate neighbors.

George and Henry Grafton, to fill their time during vacation and to make a little money, set up a candy and popcorn store with their parents' permission in an unoccupied shop on the village street.

'Now,' said George, 'we shall have a good many ladies among our customers; and it won't do to let the men smoke in here.'

'Oh, no,' said Harry, 'we'll put up a sign, "No Smoking Allowed."'

'I guess we'd better be a little more polite in our notice,' said George, 'so that we shan't offend any of our smoking customers.'

The boys put their heads together to invent a polite 'no smoking' notice, and at last, with a pleasing sense of having done exactly the right thing, hung up the following neatly lettered inscription:

'Customers will please take Notis that if they wish to Smoke in Here they will ples ether extinguish their Pipes or else Go Outdoors.'—'Everybody's Paper.'

An Accursed Business.

(The Rev. Albert H. Plumb, D.D., in 'Religious Intelligencer.')

'The man who bringeth wicked devices to pass' is the man who runs a saloon,
Or stocks a saloon,
Or gives bonds for a saloon,
Or votes to license a saloon,
Or patronizes a saloon,
Or advocates an army canteen saloon,
Or fills the newspapers with contradicted lies claiming that it is harmful to abolish the canteen saloon.

One day no saloon-keeper can be found on earth. 'Yet a little while and the wicked shall not be; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and he shall not be.'

A little while in God's calendar seems a great while in man's.

'Come, Lord, and tarry not,
Bring the long-looked-for day;
Oh, why these years of waiting here,
These ages of delay?'

'For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.' Selling intoxicating beverages is a work of the devil. What is fiendish if not the persistent effort, by decorating saloons and by giving thirst-inciting free lunches, to fasten on a young man an appetite which the saloon-keepers must know may ruin him, and which they can't know, in any case, will not ruin him, body and soul?

Notable Testimonies.

I should always advise youths about to enter upon commercial life to avoid intoxicating liquors even in moderation, as there can be no telling how much the taste may grow. If they never touch them, they will never want them, and probably they will lead happier lives, save more money, and have clearer heads for business.—Sir George Newnes.

I wish to say to every young man that I am more and more convinced that total abstinence from intoxicating liquor is the only safe course that can be taken to build up a successful life. It is not cowardly to get behind a pledge, but heroic to anchor to a principle which not only helps the man who has taken the stand, but his friends, who are influenced by his courage and faithfulness.—John Wanamaker.

Drink should always be written with a big 'D' because it first dazzles its victims, then delights them, deludes them, draws them, drags them, degrades them, destroys them, and damns them, body and soul. That was the history of drink, and they could not write drink with too large a 'D.' Alcohol was a dangerous thing, and the only rightful attitude for wise and Christian men was to abstain from it and set a good example to other people.—John Kempster.

Any one of the many articles in 'World Wide' will give three cents' worth of pleasure. Surely, ten or fifteen hundred such articles during the course of a year are well worth a dollar.

'Northern Messenger' subscribers are entitled to the special price of seventy-five cents.

'World Wide.'

A weekly reprint of articles from leading journals and reviews reflecting the current thought of both hemispheres.

So many men, so many minds. Every man in his own way.—Terence.

The following are the contents of the issue of Dec. 19, of 'World Wide':

ALL THE WORLD OVER.

The United Statesman—'Punch,' London.
The City and Fiscal Speeches—By F. Harcourt Kitchin, in the 'Pilot,' London.
The 'Dumping' of German Steel—Is the British Trade Going?—The 'Times,' London.
In Panama—'Commercial Advertiser,' New York.
Fragments from the Fiscal Wonderland—The Chaplin and the Missioner—By C. G, and F. C. G. Illustrated—'Westminster Gazette.'
The Cobden Club—The English Papers.
Macedonia in Winter—Henry Nevinson, in the 'Commonwealth,' London.
Americans are not a Free People—By Ray Stannard Baker, in the December 'McClure's Magazine.'
The Song of the Blouse—The 'Daily News,' London.

SOMETHING ABOUT THE ARTS.

The 'Birds' at Cambridge—By J. B. A., in the Manchester 'Guardian.'
John Ruskin: A Vindication—An Address to British Workmen—The 'St. George,' organ of the English Ruskin Societies. Abridged.
The Song of the Battipali—The 'Globe,' London.

CONCERNING THINGS LITERARY.

The Angels—Poem by William Drummond, of Hawthornden.
The Feast of the Snow—Gilbert Chesterton, in the 'Commonwealth,' London.
Let Holly have the Mastery—Old English Carol.
The Land of His Nativity—From 'Studies of the Portrait of Christ'—By the Rev. Geo. Matheson.
The Creed of a Credulous Person—An Example of the Truth of Fairy Tales—By G. K. Chesterton, in 'Black and White,' London.
The Holiday Problem—By W. S., in the 'Pilot,' London.
The Children's Guests—The 'Spectator,' London.
Delayed in Transmission—A Christmas Joke at Mecnaciochran—By Jane Barlow, in the 'Pilot,' London.
A Talker's Misadventure—The 'Morning Post,' London.
Trevelyan's History—By Prof. Dodd, in the New York 'Times Saturday Review.'

HINTS OF THE PROGRESS OF KNOWLEDGE.

Sports or Business—By William James, jr., in the 'Harvard Graduates' Magazine.'
Artificial Camphor—The 'Scientific American.'
Applied Science and Social Control—By Michael E. Sadler, M.A., in 'St. George,' concluded.
First Immigrants from Asia—The 'Sun,' New York.
Science Notes.

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JOHN DOUGALL & SON, Publishers, Montreal.

Correspondence

A NEW YEAR'S GIFT.

Dear Boys and Girls,—The story has come to us of a little colored girl down in Virginia who had an intense longing to be a missionary. She was the eldest in a small orphanage, and used to take great delight in teaching the younger children about Jesus and his love. She was also very useful about the home, and faithful and patient in her daily tasks. She was hoping to prepare herself for a larger field of usefulness, when she was suddenly struck down by a fatal disease. She bore her illness with great sweetness, and received with loving gratitude the tender nursing and care given her by one who had been more than a mother to her. But she always believed that she was going to recover, because she had consecrated her life to God, and intended to be a missionary. But our loving Heavenly Father had another plan for her life, and he took her to be with himself just a year ago.

Little Della was very fond of reading the 'Messenger,' and that probably helped turn her heart toward missions. Since she could not go herself as a missionary, I have wondered if some of our 'Messenger' readers would not like to help send the 'Messenger' in her name to some of those whom she would have loved so dearly to have helped. We know of several responsible persons who would gladly undertake the distribution of these papers among the poorer colored people of the South in real missionary work. If you would like to help in this little Missionary Memorial to Della, we would be glad to receive your gifts, however small. If you send stamps or money orders in your letter, be sure to wrap your contribution in a separate paper, and label it carefully for the 'Della Memorial Fund,' so that it will not get mixed with your own subscription. All contributions to this fund will be acknowledged in the 'Messenger,' and as we hope to send the papers in lots of ten at least, each twenty cents will mean the sending of fifty-two copies of the 'Messenger' to needy places. Although you give but once, the influence of your gift lasts throughout the year. Do not forget that you have the chance to be a foreign missionary through the Post-Office Crusade for India and a home missionary through the 'Della Memorial Fund' for the South.

Your loving friend,
CORRESPONDENCE EDITOR

Little Shemogue.

Dear Editor,—I like the 'Messenger' better than any paper I know of. The stories are so interesting. My papa says the 'Weekly Witness' is the best weekly paper in Canada. Wishing you every success in your grand work.

WILLIAM A. D.

Eastman Springs, Ont.

Dear Editor,—I like the 'Northern Messenger.' I like the 'Text Hunt for Tinies.' I think the birthday book is nice. I would like a text for my little brother, his birthday being on Jan. 17. J. Anson K. is his name. EVA M. K.

Roselawn Cottage,
Seabright, N.S.

Dear Editor,—Seabright is a very pretty little town, and is a favorite resort of tourists. There are two large hotels here. The Seabright Carriage Co. is one of the largest firms in the place, of which my brother and uncle are the managers. There is a telephone line between Seabright and Halifax, a distance of twenty-two miles. I am sending a club of six subscribers for the fountain pen. I earned the Bible in April. My sister takes the 'Messenger.' I like it very much.

F. B. H.

Dalkeith P.O., Ont.

Dear Editor,—I have two sisters and four brothers. My oldest sister is in the city of Montreal, and my younger sister is going to school, and my older brother, too. Dalkeith is a very nice place. There are two stores and a post-office, a blacksmith's shop, a carriage shop, a feed and farm implement store, a station and a freight shed, a water tank, a saw-mill, and a schoolhouse.

I received a Bagster Bible. I think it is very nice for so little work. The 'Messenger' is also a very nice paper.

ANNIE MARY McL.

Dear Editor,—I live on a farm near Maidstone. I go to school nearly every day, and I am in the fourth class. I was ten years old on Aug. 31. I have a kitten which catches many mice, and sometimes it catches rats. I take the 'Messenger,' and I think it is a very good paper for little boys. I have five brothers and five sisters. I am the youngest of the family, and the only one going to school. I also attend Sunday-school. Two of my sisters are Sunday-school teachers. One of my sisters is in Calgary, N.W.T. We have had many snowstorms here. I have signed the Temperance Pledge.

LEONARD J. L.

Linwood.

Dear Editor,—My birthday comes on the 19th of April. I will be 8 years old. I go to school every day. My teacher's name is Miss M. I have a cat called 'Tim' and a dog called 'Spot,' and I have three ducks. We have fine fun at school on the ice. We live one mile and a half from Linwood.

LYLE P.

Kolin, Assa., N.W.T.

Dear Editor,—I am a boy thirteen years of age. My birthday is on Oct. 20. I took the 'Messenger' for two years, and I enjoy reading the stories and the correspondence in it. It is a nice paper. I have two brothers and one sister. We have a new town called Esterhazy, so now our district called Kolin. We live on a farm four miles from Esterhazy. The town is getting big, and there are four elevators, three stores, one hardware store, one hotel and one implement shop. Oh, the letter is getting long! Good-bye.

JOHN PANGRAS K.

Stonequarry, Ont.

Dear Editor,—My sister takes the 'Messenger.' I will be twelve years old on Dec. 2. I have two sisters and one brother. Our post-office is a mile away, and we try to get the mail every day we can. I go to the Methodist church, which is a little way from our post-office. I have a great grandmother who is the same age as the Queen if she had lived. She is staying with us now. LOIS A. S.

Manotick.

Dear Editor,—I have taken the 'Northern Messenger' two years, and we all like it well. We live in a beautiful country, just two miles from the village of Manotick, and thirteen from Ottawa, and just about ten minutes' walk from Long Island locks.

I have five brothers, two older than myself and three younger. I will be ten years old on Dec. 2. MABEL A.

Sydney Forks, C.B.

Dear Editor,—My birthday will be on Dec. 11, and I will be eight years of age. I am the only girl in the family. I have five brothers. A. M. E. MacD.

St. Mary's, Ont.

Dear Editor,—I like the 'Messenger' very much. I have a little kitty named 'Snowball.' I am eight years old. I am four feet 7 inches and a half in height. I have two brothers and one sister; her name is Violet. My oldest brother is named Campbell. MARGARET S. McC.

Brightside.

Dear Editor,—There are very few coming to school at present, only about ten or eleven. We have all about the same distance to go to school, about a mile and a half. I have two brothers and two sisters. One of my brothers and one of my sisters come to school. The other two are too small to come. In the winter we have a fine time skating. The young people of Brightside made a rink, and we meet every Tuesday and Friday to skate. Our skating rink is sixty yards long and seven wide. We live about a hundred yards from the rink. We go to town to skate also. We live four miles from town.

GERTIE R. (age14).

Kilsyth, Ont.

Dear Editor,—We have been taking the 'Messenger' for a long time, and we like it very much, and would not like to do without it. I have three brothers, but no sisters. I have been going to school till I got a cold, and could not go. I go to the Sunday-school, too.

EVA A. F. (aged 11).

South Middleton.

Dear Editor,—I am a little girl eleven years old. Last spring my mamma took my sister and our baby brother and me to Detroit. We had a nice time. Our uncle took us to Wonderland. We saw lots of animals. I will tell you the names of some of them: monkey, kangaroo, bear, wild cat, panther, deer and crocodile. I will now close, and let my sister tell you about the elephant.

BESSIE MARY W.

Dear Editor,—As my sister has told you about some of the animals, I will tell you about the elephants. When they first came out they took hold of each other, and then walked round and round. Then they danced on tubs on all their feet, and then on their hind feet on bottles. The man gave them some candy. Then one elephant stood up on his hind feet and held his front feet up in the air, and then another elephant came and stood in front of him; then the man told him to go and lie down. The elephant went and lay down in the middle of the floor, and another elepnant came and stood on him; then they went away. But pretty soon a man came with his hand on one of their necks. The elephant had a pair of glasses on, an apron and a hat. The people all laughed at him. A man tied something to his tail, with which he was to beat a drum. While he beat the drum another elephant played a game. He would take a ball in his trunk, and throw it at the nine-pins. Once he knocked them all down, and then the people all clapped their hands and threw the ball back to him and told him to try it again. So he tried it again, and he only got two down. He tried it three times, then the man gave him some candy and he went away. At last a little elephant came, and three men came and got a bicycle. The elephant came and got on the bicycle, using his front feet for hands. He rode all around two or three times; then they went away, and we went to our home. I am trying to get up a club for your paper.

M. L. W. (age 12).

Brightside, Man.

Dear Editor,—I am going to school, and I am in the third reader and expect to be promoted soon. I like going to school better than staying at home. My teacher's name is Miss McM. She takes the 'Messenger.'

CLEVELAND R. (age 10).

Brightside School.

Dear Editor,—I go to school, and I am in the third book. Our teacher takes the 'Messenger,' and she wants me to write a letter to it.

I was once out picking berries, and a bear came along and he was going to kill me, when I climbed a tree and stayed up there till it was dark. Father was anxious to know where I was, and he came out to look for me, and carried his rifle. He was near me, when I told him there was a bear at the foot of the tree. He came up with his rifle and shot the bear. I got down from the tree, and I did not go berry-picking after that.

MAURICE S. (age 10).

HOUSEHOLD.

Macaroni in Various Ways

('N. E. Homestead.')

Boiled Macaroni.—Break the sticks in short pieces, cook in salted water for at least one-half hour. Drain in a colander and pour cold water through it to cleanse and keep it from sticking. Return to the cooking vessel. Pour in enough milk to almost cover, add butter, and pepper, and thicken with flour moistened with cold milk. The addition of chopped left-over scraps of meat is an improvement. Or, liquor left from a meat stew may be used instead of the milk.

Baked Macaroni with White Sauce.—Cook the macaroni in salted water till tender. Put into a shallow baking dish and pour over it a sauce made of one tablespoon each of butter and flour, half a teaspoon salt, a dash of pepper, and one cup of sweet milk. Mix two-thirds cup of cracker crumbs with two tablespoons of melted butter and sprinkle over the top. Bake till the crumbs are brown.

Macaroni and Cheese.—Boil and prepare as above. Grate half cup of good dry cheese, put part of it with the macaroni and mix the remainder with the cracker crumbs.

Macaroni and Eggs.—Mix two hard-boiled eggs, chopped fine, with the cooked macaroni. Sprinkle each layer with salt and pepper, and add a little made mustard, if desired. Cover with milk and buttered crumbs and bake till the crumbs are brown.

Macaroni and Tomatoes.—Boil till tender and cover with tomato sauce made of one tablespoon each of butter and flour, a little salt and pepper, and one cup tomato juice cooked together. A little chopped onion, fried in butter may be added to the sauce. Over the top spread buttered cracker crumbs and bake till brown.

Macaroni Soup.—Cook two or four sticks of macaroni, according to above directions. Then cut into short lengths. This will be a sufficient amount for one quart of soup stock. Bring the stock to a boil, add the macaroni, one teaspoon salt, and one-half teaspoon of pepper.

Household Hints

A housekeeper writes to an eastern contemporary: 'It gives me pleasure to inform you what will entirely exterminate, root out and destroy every moth, or egg of moth, whether in carpets, clothes or furniture. I have a large house full of the richest carpets, all very woolly, also rich furniture, all of which has been in use since 1875, and not a moth has been seen at this date. But the first year we moved in we had millions, although everything was new. Twice a year I take turpentine and a paint-brush, and saturate the edges of the carpets all around, move all the furniture, and get at the dark and dusty corners and in dark closets. I rub the brush all over if carpeted. For rich furniture take paper and wet it with turpentine, and nail the paper under the sofas and chairs. The smell of this will drive out the moths and kill their eggs.'

Simple and inexpensive dessert dishes are ever in demand. One such is a velvet cream that may be put together in a few minutes, thus economizing time as well as materials. All you will need will be two teaspoonfuls of gelatine, one-half cup of water, one pint of rich cream, four tablespoonfuls of sugar, flavoring to taste. Oranges give rise to many inexpensive dishes. For instance, make a batter consisting of one-half pint sweet milk, two eggs, one teaspoonful baking powder, one tablespoonful flour. Slice oranges crossways and dip in batter. Fry in hot lard.

Housework is automatic and does not supply the needed amount and kind of exercise women require. It is automatic and usually but one set of muscles are brought into action. The housewife should seek the fresh air and sunshine and take such exercise as will compel deep but not laborious breathing.—'Ladies' Home Journal.'

Take Care of Your Health

People have no right to be careless concerning their health. First, they have their own duties to do, and they cannot do them properly without health. Second, no person can be sick without interfering with the rights and privileges and comforts of others. Probably three-fourths of the sickness and disease in the world could be prevented by a little care, and it is a shame for people who ought to be and might be well and useful in the world, to make themselves ill and dependent and miserable, and so hinder others from their work, and weary them and make them ill, when a little care might have prevented it all. It is every person's duty to be well and strong, rather than weak, sickly, miserable, helpless, and burdensome to others; hence, all persons should be thoughtful and careful about their health.—'The Safeguard.'

There is Always a Something

There is always a something, whatever your lot,
And, oh! how that something annoys!
Though the merest of specks it becomes a big blot,
A pang at the heart of your joys.
What matters the manifold blessings you've got
If there's one little cloud in the blue?
There is always a something, whatever your lot,
And if it's not one thing—it's two!

If it wasn't for something left in or left out
Our happiness would be complete;
'Tis the lack of one room that we worry about,
Or the dwelling is on the wrong street.
If we only were thin, if we only were stout
If we had something different to do,
There is always something left in or left out,
And if it's not one thing—it's two!

There is always a something, as certain as fate,
A fly in the ointment we meet;
The rich and the poor and the lowly and great,
Find bitter mixed in with the sweet.
For each has an if with his neighbors to make,
And it follows this changing life all through;
There is always a something, as certain as fate,
And if it's not one thing—it's two!
—Hunter MacCulloch.

The Nutritive Value of Prunes

The prune as an article of household diet has fallen into disrepute in some measure and has become the butt of the boarding-house joker. But the day of its renaissance is dawning. Housekeepers are becoming aware that its reputation has suffered from the careless handling and packing of this fruit, and from the improper cooking. The improvement in the prune so noticeable of late proceeds from the use of more scientific methods of drying and greater care and cleanliness in packing. For most purposes prunes should be soaked and soaked; first of all in warm water for half an hour; then washed thoroughly and put in clean cold water for twenty-four hours. Then they should be cooked for a short time until the skins become tender. Prunes are a most healthful article of food, their effect upon the nervous system being most beneficial. They are also of nutritive value, one medical writer stating that a pound of prunes is equal to a gallon of milk as a food.—'Catholic News.'

THE INVENTOR'S WORK.

For the benefit of our readers we publish a list of patents recently granted by the Canadian and American Governments through the agency of Messrs. Marion & Marion, Patent Attorneys, Montreal, Canada, and Washington, D.C. Information regarding any of the patents cited will be supplied free of charge by applying to the above-named firm.

Canada—Nos. 82,631, Ernest Renaud, Montreal, Que., railway signal system; 84,254, James Dickie, Cumberland, N.S., harness pad; 84,255, George Kerr, Winnipeg, Man., rail joint; 84,400, Charles C. Swanson, Wetaskiwin, Alta., self-propelling sleigh.

United States—Nos. 745,420, James Ed. Currie, Jr., Montreal, Que., paint brush; 746,279, Edward Brougham, Brandon, Man., pneumatic seat post for bicycles; 746,984, Malcolm McKellar, Nesbitt, Man., cloth measuring device.

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